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DEBBIE STABENOW
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Contact: Dave Lemmon, Shanna Singh
Phone: 202-224-4822

**Public Citizen Releases New Report Unmasking Sham
Ad Campaign by Pharmaceutical Lobby**
U.S. Senators Debbie Stabenow, Ted Kennedy Join in Event

WASHINGTON—Public Citizen today unveiled a new report that documents the pharmaceutical industry lobby's multi-million dollar sham advertising campaign. This campaign uses a seniors' front group called the United Seniors Association to promote a Medicare prescription drug bill favored by the pharmaceutical industry but opposed by the majority of seniors' groups. Frank Clemente, Director of Public Citizen's Congress Watch, released the report in a Capitol Hill event today with Senators Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Ted Kennedy (D-MA).

"As coordinator of the Senate Prescription Drug Task Force, several of my colleagues and I called on pharmaceutical CEOs in May to abandon this sham ad campaign and redirect their funds toward lowering soaring prescription drug prices for America's seniors. Two months later, we have learned that not only have they ignored our requests, the companies have backed these ads with more money than any other ad campaign since the last election," said Stabenow. "It is our hope that Americans will see through these misleading ads and recognize them for what they really are—an attempt to trick them into supporting legislation that offers little more than empty promises and inadequate coverage."

Public Citizen estimates the United Seniors Association has spent nearly \$10 million over the last 12 months running TV and radio "issue ads" that promote GOP legislation favored by drug companies. Funded predominantly by PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America), the drug industry trade group, the misleading ads are running just as the U.S. Senate prepares for a showdown on a proposal to add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare and efforts to lower soaring prescription drug prices.

"The Republican plan promises help, but delivers only large gaps in coverage and premiums that will still leave many seniors struggling to afford the medications they so desperately need. In the end, their plan would effectively deny any coverage of the average senior's prescription drug costs for anywhere from three to six months of the year. This is simply not good enough," said Stabenow.

Starting this week, the U.S. Senate will begin debate on a number of prescription drug proposals. The first piece of legislation on the table is the Greater Access to Affordable Pharmaceuticals Act (S.812) sponsored by Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and cosponsored by Senator Stabenow and others. This bipartisan legislation, which is actively opposed by PhRMA, will close the loopholes in the approval process for generic drugs and allow them to come to the market in a timely manner and dramatically reduce prices for consumers.